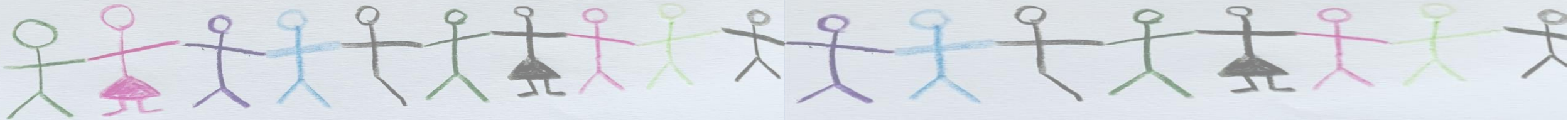


LIIA / ALDCS Summit 2023: *'Together for London's Children'*



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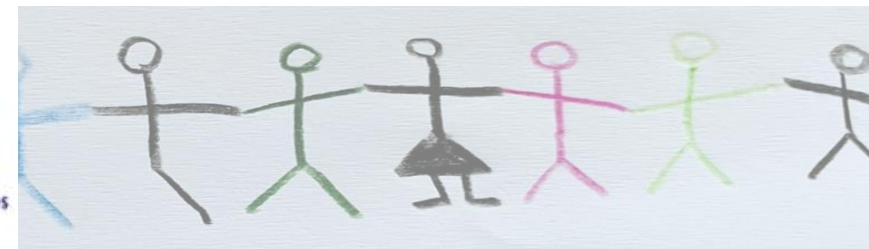
Workshop 3

Developing the London workforce together

Nigel Chapman – *ALDCS Lead for Workforce and DCS, London Borough of Brent*

Debbie Jones – *ALDCS Lead on National Workforce Taskforce and DCS, London Borough of Croydon*

Teresa Hills – *Head of Family Support/Safeguarding, Children with Disabilities, SWIS Workforce Development, London Borough of Merton and Member of the Leadership in Colour Reference Group*



The problems we are trying to solve...

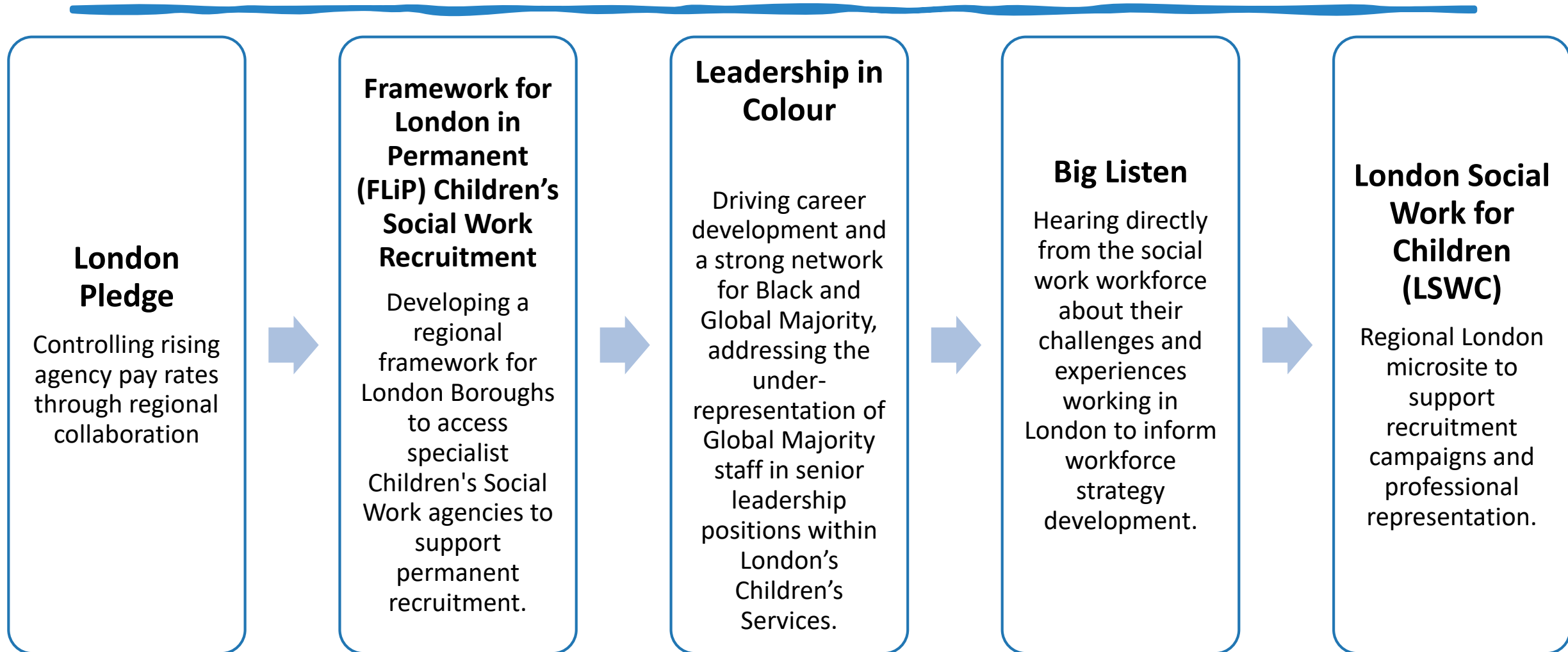
Ongoing workforce problems whilst maintaining high quality services for children and families

Stability of relationships between practitioners and children to enable better outcomes

Reliance on agency staff, balanced with achieving a stable permanent workforce

Role of the Social Worker in local government employment being sufficiently attractive to the market

London's collaborative workforce projects:



Responding to the agency market together: The London Pledge

Key Elements

**32 London Boroughs
signed up to a single
capped rate agreement**

**Agency push and pull
factor research**

**100% regional quarterly
agency pay rate data
collection**

**DCS Led sub-regional
multi-discipline
governance**

**Active engagement with
agency provider market**

**Developed a regional
statement of principles
and practice for remote
working**

Working in partnership with providers

“The pledge is in place and despite all us agency folk having some trepidation at first it does seem to be working well and is of benefit to all of us.”

“It is working better than we expected and more than any previous agreement. We have seen more traction since September.”

“There is more of a level playing field between boroughs now, so it now comes down to each borough’s reputation as an employer and place to work.”

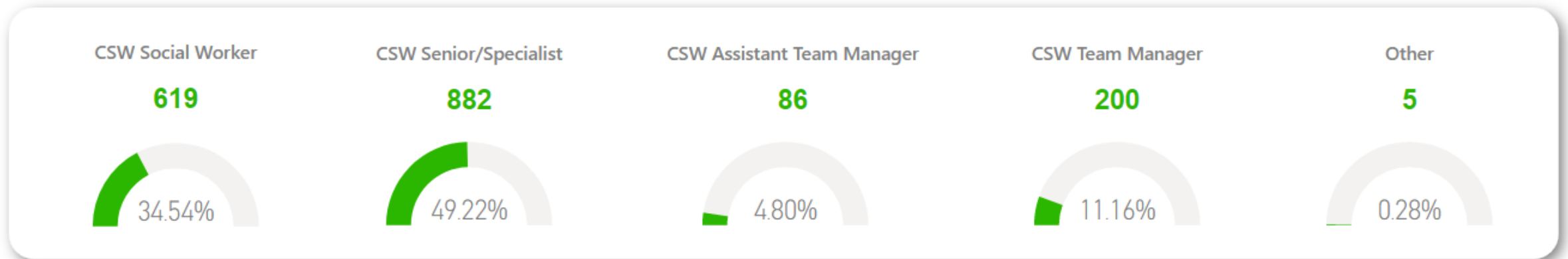
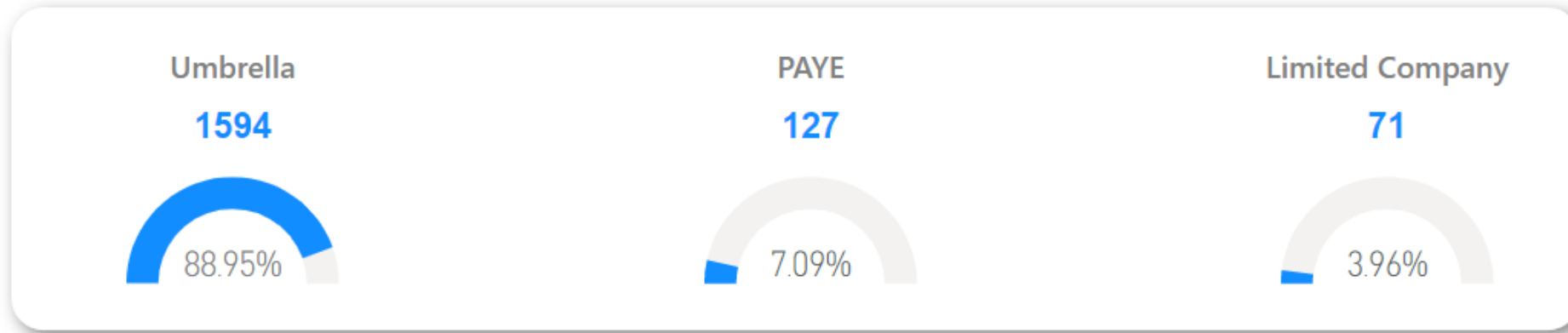
“Hiring managers are much more informed and we are seeing a real improvement in understanding and application of the agreement.”

“We are seeing the positive impact of all MSPs giving agencies the same message. We are all telling them the same thing.”

“The market pressures are not specific to social work or London. We are seeing the same staffing challenges in food safety, PAs and many other areas.”

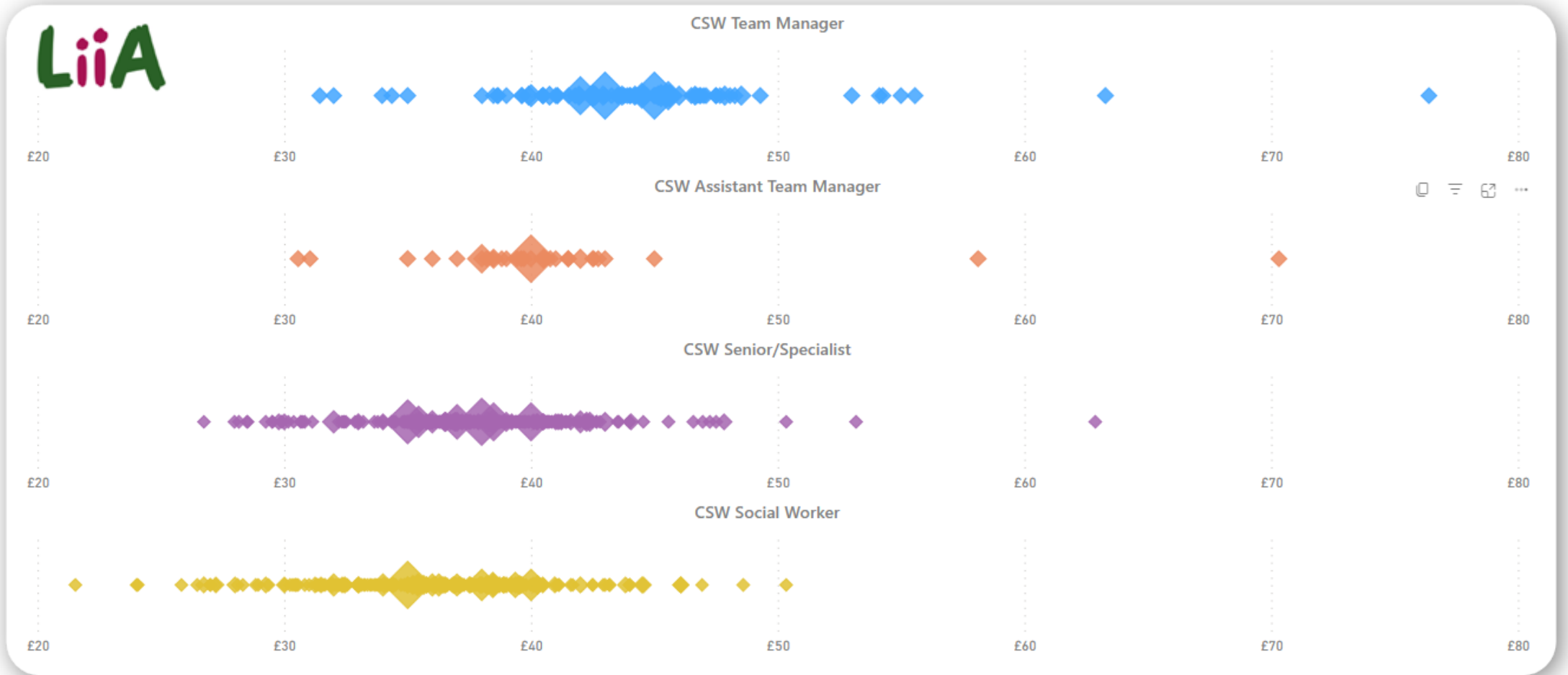
Data at the Heart: *The London picture*

LiA London Q2 2022/2023 Overview - Children's Social Work Agency Staff



Data at the Heart – aiming for pay rate consistency

Range of Hourly Pay Rate (after PAYE adjustments)



All London & All Job Types



Impact and Learnings – a national challenge...

Good data

Director of Children's Services ownership

Supplier engagement and partnership working

Transitioning legacy contracts (stability v cost)

Cross-regional and national engagement

“The ‘agency issue’ is a symptom of deeper workforce challenges that we must address together in order to achieve long-term change for our workforce”.

“This work has reinforced that we can make change if we work together, and begin to unsettle some market forces that we thought were perhaps out of our reach.”

Tackling disproportionality together: Leadership in Colour

Key Elements

Working together to tackle racial disproportionality in senior leadership

Three funded Black and Asian Leadership Initiative (BALI) cohorts

Sessions for AD's (Practice Leaders) to develop whole service approaches

Providing a range of elements to support both staff and organisational development

Reference group acts as a critical friend to ALDCS

Running sessions for DCSs and Chief Execs/HR Leads on cultural competence

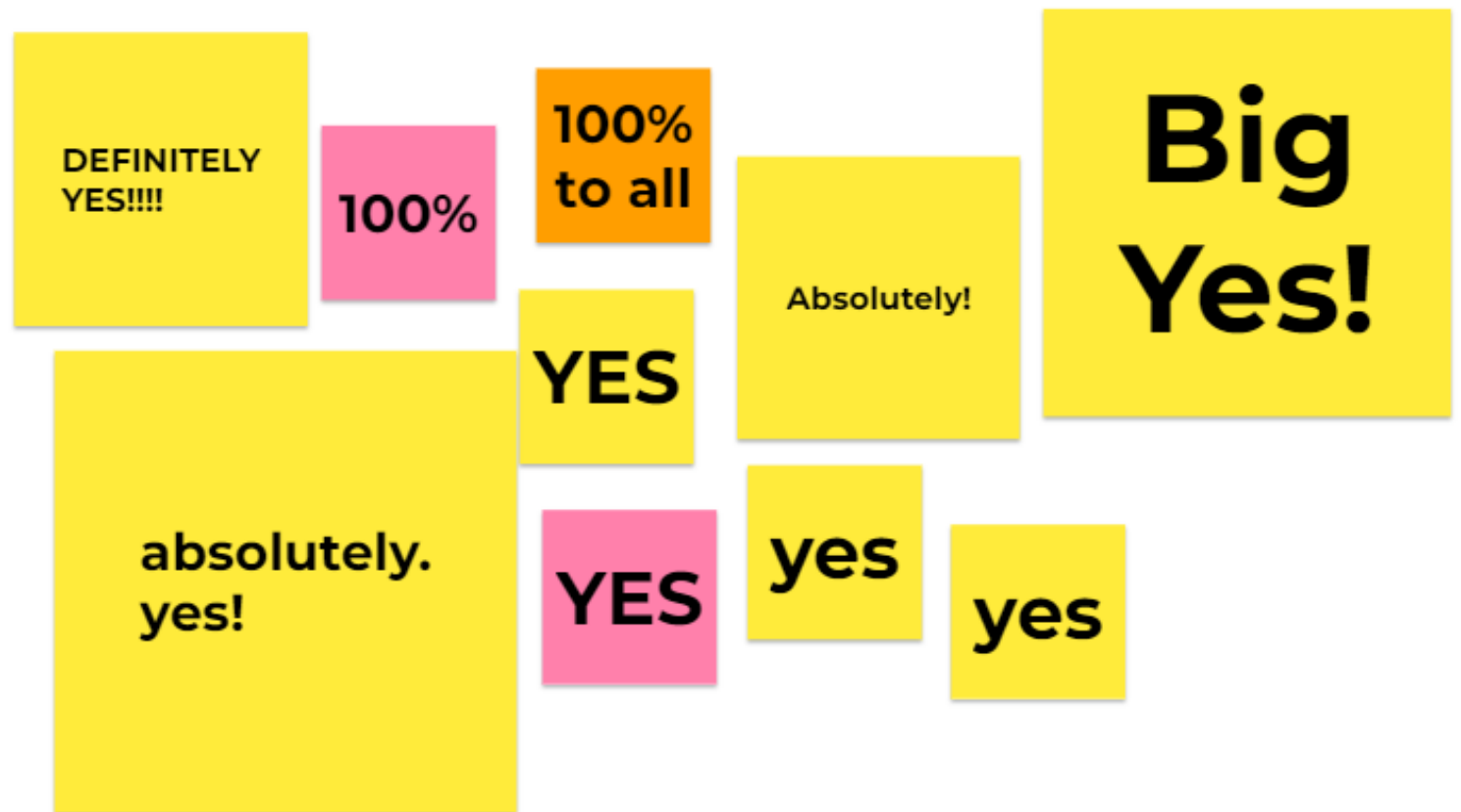
Impact and Learnings: *the power of support structures*

"I've built confidence in both me and my organisation."

"I am generally more confident but also see the confidence in my staff growing."

"I am more present in the authority and am now sitting at the table"

Has the Leadership in Colour Reference Group been of benefit in providing a safe space/ support network for black and global majority colleagues?



What we've heard in the #thebiglisten

Image of Social Work as a Profession

The view of the public is that SWs are incompetent. The media's negative coverage of the job does not help and the recent high profile child deaths. We need to highlight good stories. (Perm SW)

I am really proud to be a social worker. (Perm SW)

I struggle with the public perception of social work. The fear from communities and parents is that we are just going to take children away. (Perm SW)

SWIS project has revitalised my passion. The visibility of SWs in the community would go a long way to breaking down barriers. It's important to understand the prevention role that we hold i.e. how do we stop removing the child. (Perm SW)

Experiences of Racism & Discrimination

In my LA there was a really good course for Global Majority staff – they had coaches and mentoring, which was really helpful, addressing how you deal with imposter syndrome. In a previous LA, then had 2-step team manager role, to help you carry on developing. (SW Manager)

I felt every approach to prevent my upward progression was taken. I left my permanent role due to racism and feeling pushed out. (Agency SW)

Leaders must be intentional about addressing racism. Agencies pound the table for global majority staff when authorities don't. (SW Manager)

Caseloads & Resources

There is greater demand for services, but fewer resources. (Perm SW)

We need to do better and invest in retaining staff. (Perm SW)

My manager is brilliant. I feel really safe in my role. If I don't get it right, then I can admit to making a mistake – there is not a punitive culture in the LA. (SW Manager)

Pay & Wellbeing

The extra hours that we continuously work means that our pay is actually quite low. (SW Manager)

My Service Manager makes it a point to know everyone by name, sits with everyone and sends email to congratulate the teams good work. That visibility and presence has made a huge difference to moral. (NQ/Student SW)

When you compare perm salaries to agency salaries, Agency workers are paid twice as much for less experience. (Perm SW)

Flexibility & Post-Pandemic

It would be nice to have the opportunity to take longer break when/if requested. (Perm SW)

Leaders must acknowledge the challenges of managing work-life balance in this profession and be flexible. (Perm SW Manager)

People are afraid to take their own leave because no one will cover the work. (Student SW)

Career Development & Progression

Group supervision provides a safe space to reflect. (Student SW)

The government should enable free social work courses so that people don't have to pay for their career progression. Students are struggling so much we are going to see higher drop out rates. (Perm SW)

Different ways to build skills and go into a different service areas should be considered, to prevent SW's leaving the profession. (Perm SW)

Next steps...

London Pledge

- Data developments and analysis
- Quarterly evaluations
- One year in impact assessment



Framework for London in Permanent (FLiP) Children's Social Work Recruitment

- Framework tender release to agency market
- International recruitment market research



Leadership in Colour

- Annual Staff Conference March 2023
- Co-production of next years the programme with DCS and the Reference Group
- Longitudinal study of impact on careers of Global Majority



Big Listen

- Focus group and survey analysis
- Workforce data learnings
- Final report and workforce strategy development



London Social Work for Children (LSWC)

- Website design and build
- Final business case and LA sign up

1. Drive sufficiency and supply

- Increase supply of talent to the children's service workforce in order to strengthen the capacity
- Develop a modern, confident and forward-looking profession that is equipped with the skills and expertise to make a positive difference to people's lives.

2. Strengthen and model leadership at all levels

- Develop strong, culturally competent leadership at all levels that builds trust in the profession and ensures that everyone can take pride in their workforce.
- Develop first line management training opportunities to ensure that our future leaders have the skills and confidence to manage, develop and identify talent.
- Amplify the voice of leadership to galvanise and influence on practice and policy and improve public perception and confidence.

3. Ambitious London offer and increased stability

- Develop a bold London offer that engages diverse and local talent connected to place.
- Respond to the changed expectations and needs of the workforce, increasing flexibility and opportunity for individuals to enable retention across the varied and multiple professions required to deliver children's services.

4. Empower and develop talent

- Ensure that our workforce is listened to, feel safe and able to practice across the capital, with consistent levels of support and that inclusive behaviours are adopted
- Ensure training opportunities are reflective of evidenced areas for development and are made available to all, underpinned by consistent practice standards.
- Ensure the career pathway is clear and visible, and that staff are motivated and supported to engage in their professional development.
 - Prioritise the wellbeing and emotional resilience of the workforce.

London's Strategic Workforce Objectives

5. Tackling racism and disproportionality

- Ensure that anti-racism is woven into the fabric of activities to ensure equity and fair treatment for all and that everyone has the opportunity to thrive and that the workforce is representative of the community it serves.
- Support local authorities to tackle racism, embed race equality in policies and be accountable for effective implementation to address deep rooted cultures of racism.

6. Sustainability

- Ensure this workforce strategy is owned and delivered in full collaboration with the workforce, to achieve long term change.
- Incorporate the voice of children and their families to support co-production and continuous service improvement.

Questions for your tables

- 1. How can we develop an equitable, affordable and ambitious London offer** to attract candidates to Local Authorities, increase access to children's services in order to strengthen stability and financial sustainability?
- 2. How can we strengthen training and career development opportunities** across all levels to achieve a skilled and supported workforce with a clear and visible career pathway for all?
- 3. What steps are needed to ensure a workforce strategy is owned and delivered in full collaboration with the workforce,** and what contributions can delegates and their organisation make to help London achieve them?



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*London Innovation &
Improvement Alliance (LIIA)*